

# NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**VIRGINIA FIELD OFFICE**

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## **Virginia's Turfgrass Industry Makes Significant Contributions To The State's Agricultural Economy!**

The Virginia Turfgrass Industry continues to be a vital and growing segment of Virginia's agricultural economy, contributing over 424,000 jobs in 2004 to the state's economy with a payroll of an estimated \$1.2 billion dollars, according to a recent survey conducted by the Virginia Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

An estimated 1,702,000 acres of turf was maintained in Virginia in 2004 compared to 1,368,200 acres in 1998, the last time the survey was conducted. Turfgrass acreage, production and maintenance expenses were measured for eleven distinct sectors; golf courses, sod farms, churches, licensed cemeteries, highway roadsides, airports, parks, schools, home lawns, lawn service companies and general areas.

Home lawns accounted for the largest area of turf at 1,048,000 acres, 334,000 more acres than in 1998. Highway roadsides at 298,000 acres, was the second largest maintained turf area followed by general areas estimated at 186,600 acres.

An estimated 42,100 acres were maintained in state, regional, and city park systems. Golf courses accounted for and estimated 36,900 acres of turf with 4,100 workers engaged in turf management.

### **General Statistics, All Sectors, 2004**

| <b>Sector</b>                        | <b>Turf Acres</b>         | <b>Number of Paid Workers</b> | <b>New Turf Acres Established</b> | <b>Cost of Establishing New Turf</b> | <b>Value of Turf Equipment</b>   |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Golf Courses                         | 36,900                    | 4,100                         | 680                               | \$7,979,000                          | \$189,751,000                    |
| Sod Farms <sup>4</sup>               | 7,500                     | 180                           | 600                               | \$781,000                            | \$43,570,000                     |
| General Areas                        | 186,600                   | 16,800                        | 440                               | \$2,721,000                          | \$212,357,000                    |
| Churches                             | 18,900                    | 3,800                         | 210                               | \$535,000                            | \$16,925,000                     |
| Cemeteries                           | 5,600                     | 650                           | 10                                | \$1,348,000                          | \$6,023,000                      |
| Highway Roadsides                    | 298,000                   | 35                            | 2,700                             | \$446,000                            | \$32,111,000                     |
| Airports                             | 8,600                     | 160                           | 110                               | \$100,000                            | \$6,752,000                      |
| Parks                                | 42,100                    | 2,600                         | 760                               | \$7,097,000                          | \$63,909,000                     |
| Schools <sup>1</sup>                 | 43,300                    | 2,400                         | 800                               | \$7,643,000                          | \$49,207,000                     |
| Schools <sup>2</sup>                 | 6,500                     | 1,100                         | 60                                | \$442,000                            | \$10,955,000                     |
| Home Lawns<br>Lawn Service Companies | 1,048,000<br><sup>3</sup> | 378,400<br>14,000             | 33,800<br>12,400                  | \$134,253,000<br>\$66,258,000        | \$4,113,637,000<br>\$281,152,000 |
| Total <sup>4</sup>                   | 1,702,000                 | 424,225                       | 52,570                            | \$229,603,000                        | \$5,026,349,000                  |

<sup>1</sup> - public school systems, public & private universities

<sup>2</sup> - private K-12, pre-schools, private religious schools

<sup>3</sup> - not asked in survey

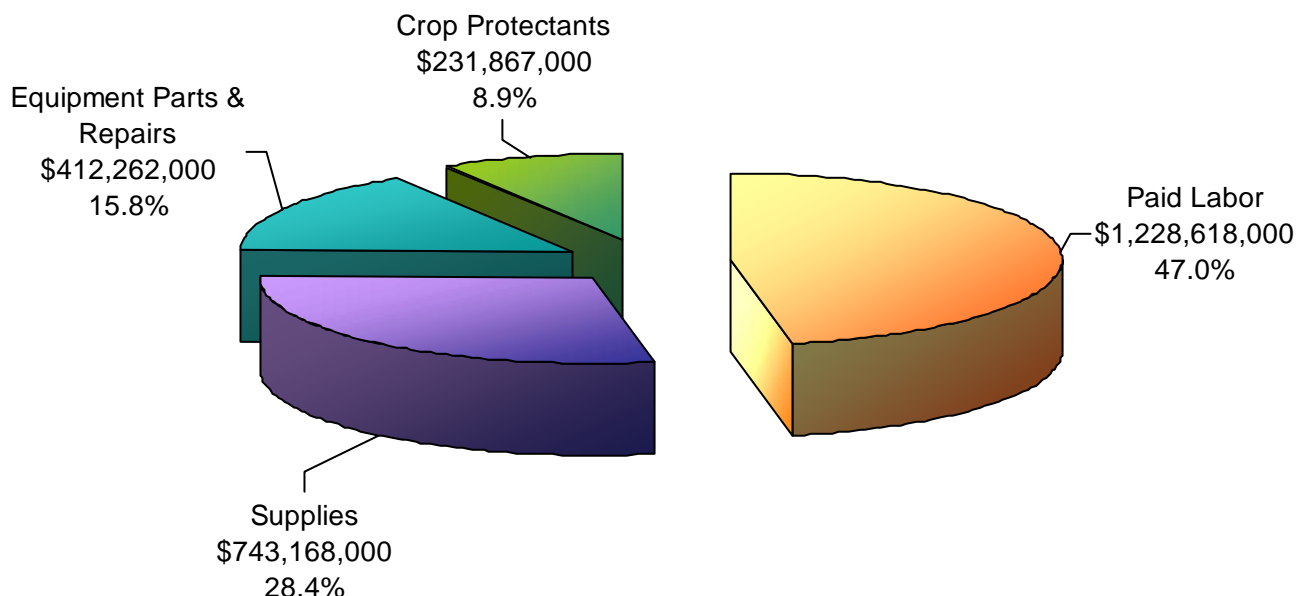
<sup>4</sup> - revised

The eleven sectors measured in this survey accounted for an estimated \$2.6 billion in expenses for labor, contract services, equipment, crop protectants, supplies, and new turf establishments. This was a 70% percent increase over 1998 expenses for the same categories.

| Sector                 | Paid Labor <sup>1</sup> | Supplies      | Equipment Parts & Repairs | Crop Protectants <sup>2</sup> | Total Expenses  |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Golf Courses           | \$66,148,000            | \$15,833,000  | \$15,367,000              | \$12,605,000                  | \$109,953,000   |
| Sod Farms <sup>5</sup> | \$10,259,000            | \$5,096,000   | \$2,232,000               | \$1,529,000                   | \$19,116,000    |
| General Areas          | \$184,086,000           | \$27,686,000  | \$20,747,000              | \$8,277,000                   | \$240,796,000   |
| Churches               | \$17,095,000            | \$1,600,000   | \$2,001,000               | \$849,000                     | \$21,545,000    |
| Cemeteries             | \$10,907,000            | \$925,000     | \$967,000                 | \$251,000                     | \$13,050,000    |
| Highway Roadsides      | \$11,592,000            | \$1,324,000   | \$11,789,000              | \$2,800,000                   | \$27,505,000    |
| Airports               | \$1,765,000             | \$174,000     | \$277,000                 | \$219,000                     | \$2,435,000     |
| Parks                  | \$33,809,000            | \$5,339,000   | \$5,499,000               | \$920,000                     | \$45,567,000    |
| Schools <sup>3</sup>   | \$27,498,000            | \$3,772,000   | \$5,371,000               | \$814,000                     | \$37,455,000    |
| Schools <sup>4</sup>   | \$4,836,000             | \$990,000     | \$956,000                 | \$187,000                     | \$6,969,000     |
| Home Lawns             | \$616,197,000           | \$596,313,000 | \$315,787,000             | \$192,462,000                 | \$1,720,759,000 |
| Lawn Service Companies | \$244,426,000           | \$84,116,000  | \$31,269,000              | \$10,954,000                  | \$370,765,000   |
| Total <sup>5</sup>     | \$1,228,618,000         | \$743,168,000 | \$412,262,000             | \$231,867,000                 | \$2,615,915,000 |

<sup>1</sup> Paid labor excludes capital improvement labor costs. <sup>2</sup>Crop protectants include weed, insect, and disease control products. <sup>3</sup>Public school systems, public & private universities. <sup>4</sup>Private K-12, pre-schools, private religious schools  
<sup>5</sup> Revised

### Turfgrass Expenses, 2004



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Cooperating with Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services